

GREENSBORO PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING

Wednesday, September 10, 2008 – 6:00pm

Brown Recreation Center – 302 E. Vandalia Street

PRESENT: Carl Brower, Jr., Paul Brown, Marc Bush, Ken Free, Lori Galbreath, David Hoggard, Rose Marie Ponton

ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Steve Branson, Candice Bruton, Kathy Cates, Jenny Caviness, John Hughes, Lynne Leonard, Bonnie Kuester, Dan Maxson, Edith McNeal, Denny Melcher, Keith Morrison, Marcie Richardson, Larry Smith, Laurie Thore, Terry Ward, Chris Wilson

OTHERS: Bob Morgan, Deputy City Manager

The regular meeting of the Greensboro Parks and Recreation Commission was held at Brown Recreation Center. David Hoggard called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the August 13, 2008 Commission Meeting were approved as submitted.

Recognition

Bonnie Kuester, Director, recognized the Parks and Recreation September Employee of the Month, Denny Melcher.

Jenny Caviness, GYC Coordinator, recognized Jasmine Echols, Gordon Farley, Johnathan Petty, Angelica Mickle, and Shabaza Vaird, recipients of the Presidential Service Award. This award is given to those who have shown dedication and passion for their community and who has volunteered a minimum of 300 hours.

Brown Recreation Center Presentation

Keith Morrison, Center Director, presented the Commission with events and programs currently held at the center.

SPEAKERS FROM THE FLOOR

- NONE -

OLD BUSINESS

Bond Campaign Update

Kevin Green, Citizen Bond Committee Chair, commended the Commission for their efforts with Parks and Recreation. Green stated that Parks and Recreation is the backbone of our community and that he served on the Parks and Recreation Commission from 1994-2000.

Green stated that the Parks and Recreation Department will have a 20 million dollar bond referendum this year. A citizen committee is working on a campaign in order to inform the public of the importance of this bond for the Parks and Recreation Department. Green stated that while serving on the Commission the citizens of Greensboro created a 20 year Master Plan in 1997 with the guidance of the Parks and Recreation staff and Woolpert, Inc. Items discussed in the Master Plan are swimming pools, neighborhood parks, tennis courts, etc. In the assessment section of the Master Plan it states Greensboro needs 5 additional swimming pools between 1997 and 2017. Now 11 years into the Master Plan no progress has been made. Past bond referendum items reflected the needs mentioned in the 20 year

Master Plan that the citizens of Greensboro helped formulate. Green quoted a section from the Master Plan, "swimming pools were a prominent discussion at the public meetings and focus group meetings. The standards indicate the need of 5 pools by 2017. The public stated that there is a desire for more indoor facilities that will accommodate recreational swimming, competitive swimming, instructional classes for swimming and exercise. Support for swimming pools need to be strong and come from all age groups including seniors, adults and youth." The bond campaign will stress this need. "The existing small outdoor facilities should be made more appealing by introducing water play features and maintaining the pools". Engineers have said that the Grimsley pool could sink into the ground. "The public outcry for indoor swimming pools warrants a recommendation of a single large citywide aquatic facility at a minimum. The site will need to accommodate leisure, recreation, competitive, instructional and therapeutic swimming." This is what the citizens have requested and is the message the bond committee is going to send. There will be a Greensboro bonds website coming online in approximately 7 days. This website will be used to inform citizens of Greensboro's bonds. The website will offer a place to make donations to assist with the campaign. The bond is about accomplishing a plan to make Parks and Recreation continue to be at the top of the state and country.

Green requested that the Commission submit letters to the editor.

Marc Bush, Commissioner, stated that we need a leader for the bond and Green is the one who can get the message out. Bush urged each Commission member to write a letter to the editor. This is a grassroots campaign; however it still takes some funding.

Hoggard stated that staff can not be advocates for the bond and the Commission needs to be advocates for them. City Council wants this Commission to take a leadership role and this is a great opportunity for the Commission to do so.

Hope Project Update

Darryl Kosciak, Youth First Coordinator, stated that the Hope Project is a community wide collaboration focused on youth gangs. Until August of this year efforts have been on a part-time basis. The Weaver and Bryan Foundations awarded a grant of \$200,000 a year for 3 years to hire more staff in order to devote a full-time focus on this project. As of August 1, 2008 three Outreach Workers have been hired and an Administrative Assistant. Kosciak introduced Dakia Davis, Administrative Assistant and Terrance McKinnon, Outreach Worker. Two other Outreach Workers Morris Cunnigan and Antonio Walker were unable to attend. For the last month staff has been in intense training. This program targets young men and women that have been referred to staff by agencies in the community, court counselors, DSS and others. Marketing efforts can now begin moving forward. The Hope Project Hotline (373-HELP) opened this summer. A website has been created but is not complete. Staff has been working on this project for 3 years and is to a point where staff can devote a full-time focus and implement the project. The Hope Project has a 3 year goal of producing results and demonstrating an impact.

Rose Marie Ponton inquired what the first steps are since training.

Kosciak replied stating that there are currently 15-20 cases and working towards each Outreach Worker having 15-20 cases each. Staff is currently informing agencies of the project and concentrating on marketing efforts. One Outreach Worker will be stationed at the Detention Center in Guilford County.

Hoggard stated that he understands that most kids join gangs because they want to belong to something. This project is building a community that will substitute that want.

Kosciak stated that the Hope Project creates a relationship and trust with youth in the family and it takes time. When asked the question what they are going to be when they're 30 most do not have an answer. Once the relationship and trust is established they begin participating in existing programs in the community, like recreation center programs. A grant received from the Governor's Crime Commission will open 5 recreation centers for after school basketball and football programs for free. Often times these are kids who don't have access to programs. It goes beyond center

programs and over to colleges and universities for arts, etc. Youth employment is another item the project is working on.

Nominating Committee Report

Hoggard stated that the Nominating Committee nominated Rose Marie Ponton as Chair and Carl Brower, Jr. as Vice-Chair.

Action Taken

A motion was made by Marc Bush and seconded by Paul Brown to approve the nominating committee recommendations. A vote in favor was unanimous.

Bush requested that the process for how someone is appointed to the Commission be presented at the next Commission meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Farmer's Market Policy Issue

Hoggard stated that there are several citizens in attendance wanting to speak to this item and informed them that the Commission would not take action tonight. The Commission has received copies of the current policy and will gather information then return with resolution at the next Commission meeting. Hoggard stated that anyone wanting to speak will be given 3 minutes to do so.

Chris Wilson, Parks, Gardens, and Program Support Manager stated that the Commission reviewed the policies for the Farmer's Market in 2007. At that time discussions were held about the impact the rules would have. Recently, there has been concern over the review of the applications and proposed exceptions to the rules. Wilson turned the presentation over to Kathy Cates, City Beautiful Director.

Cates stated that the Commission approved the Farmer's Market Policy that was updated to address the hours of operation and eliminating the portion that allowed reselling of products between November and March and replaced it with a procedure for vendors to submit a variance application that would allow selling specific products (with management approval) not native grown by the vendor. A section was added to define management procedures in addressing complaints or violations of the policy. The amended policy was submitted to the Parks and Recreation Commission for approval. The policy has the input of the Farmer's Market Advisory Committee which is an elected body of vendors by the vendors whose purpose is to provide a voice for all vendors on issues that may arise at the market. Final market decisions are made by market management. Cates recognized Larry Smith, Market Manager of 20 years and Lynne Leonard, Market Coordinator. The policy as it now reads prohibits reselling of items not made by the seller unless approved by market management through a variance application. All vendors are provided a copy of the market policy prior to their application. As part of the application process appropriate certifications and a complete listing of items to be sold are required. The vendor is not allowed to sale an item that has been submitted for a variance until it is approved. The intent of the application for variance was to allow limited reselling of items which customers expected. For example, if a drought or a late freeze impacted a locally grown product local farmers could bring that product from other sources to provide customers' demand. The variance is not intended to allow continuous reselling by vendors. Several weeks ago market management received complaints that a vendor's variance request to sale cheese made in Ohio was denied. A petition was received from approximately 50 citizens requesting that the cheese be allowed and requesting customers have input in market policies and regulations. In an effort to address those concerns staff presented a proposed addendum to the policy which allowed a vendor to attach a petition listing 50 names to his or her application for variance showing support for allowing that particular specialty food product and require they meet several other requirements including that the product is not otherwise available in the community. The public has been invited to comment in writing August 15-September 15. To date staff has received 5 written comments in favor of the addendum, in particular in favor of the cheese product, and 12 who are

protesting and support continuing to focus on products at the market are locally produced by the vendor. Based on the limited response we received staff did not feel that it was appropriate to bring the addendum forward for your approval; however resolution is being requested to allow staff, vendors, and customers the opportunity to move forward in supporting our vital growing and historical market.

Speakers from the floor

The following individuals spoke in favor of the current policy and against the addendum:

Lynne Edel, 5501 Drake Road, customer, spoke in favor of the Farmer's Market Policy that vendors should only be allowed to sale local items.

Lee Tate, 3515 Jess Hackett Road, Climax, NC, vendor, expressed concern that the integrity of the Farmer's Market is being breached as customers visit the Market thinking they are getting locally produced items and are not. Tate stated that she is in favor of the current policy and dismissing the addendum.

John Handler, Climax, NC, vendor, informed the Commission that he serves on the Farmer's Market Advisory Committee that wrote the policy. The policy was created by mostly vendors. The policy was mailed to all vendors before adoption and there were no objections. Market management needs the authority to fully enforce rules.

Carol Pryor, 996 Lillard Road, Ruffin, NC, vendor and Advisory Committee Member, spoke in favor of the current policy and opposes the addendum. Pryor stated that non-local items sold at the Market can be bought locally elsewhere in Guilford County.

Daniel Woodham, 1925 Bradford Street, vendor and customer, spoke favorably of the current policy and opposes the addendum. Woodham stated that every farmer's market that he has visited is always local.

Wesley Peterson, 2785 Mountain Hill Road, vendor, stated that he is against the addendum and in favor of the policy. Peterson expressed appreciation that the policy was being enforced even though he had to discontinue selling an item that was not local. Peterson would give up any variances that he holds for the integrity of the Market.

Brian Bush, 2541 Baker's Cross Road, vendor, spoke unfavorably of the addendum and stated that the only way the Market is going to make it and be worth while is for it to remain a farmer's market. Bush stated his appreciation to the Parks and Recreation Department.

Marie Hopper, 1533 Andover Avenue, customer, spoke in favor of the current policy. Hopper stated that she helped form the first Community Supported Agricultural (CSA) program in the state in 1993. This is a program where consumers purchase a shared farm taking a risk with the farmer on whether or not the farm produces. Hopper expressed how she wants the market items to be locally grown and she supports the farmers in her community.

Audre Quinn, 1847 Cornatzer Road, spoke in opposition of the addendum. She would like for all items to be locally grown, but also supports that other items be sold during the winter months to keep customers coming year round. Quinn is concerned that baked goods are allowed to be sold by those who are not certified for the fear of a food poisoning outbreak.

Mike Faucette, 5112 NC 150 East, Brown Summit, NC, 3rd generation vendor, spoke in favor of the policy. Faucette stated that his family sold cheese made in NC at the Market for many years and stopped when asked. Faucette requested that the Market not discriminate against different areas where cheese is made. Faucette requested that signs for the Market be placed on the highway. Faucette also expressed concerns of how he does not feel the Market can support 7 days at this time and if moved to War Memorial Stadium is should remain a farmer's market and not become a flea market. Faucette requested more parking spaces.

Ken Caneva, 406 Woodlawn Avenue, customer, stated that he strongly seconds all of those who spoke to the importance of keeping locally grown items. It is important to know who grows our food, to have some personal interaction with that person, and give our dollars to the people who produce our food. Caneva stated that he is not bothered by the sale of the cheese; however doesn't want the Market to become a flea market. If the new regulations are put into effect it will open the gate for substantial change of what is being offered at the Market. Caneva spoke in favor of the policy.

Emily Chadbourne, 707 Longnew Street, customer and member of a CSA program, which is, in her case, an opportunity to pay organic farmers a fair share for what they think they could possibly earn at the market regardless of the outcome of the weather. Chadbourne expressed opposition to opening the Market to a greater service in a wider area.

Craven Smith, 6806 Tickle Road, Gibsonville, NC, spoke in favor of the policy.

Mebane Ham, 675 Percy Street, customer, stated that she has watched the Market growth change become something wonderful. As a local resident it is a delight to walk to the Market to purchase items and has friends all over the world speak highly of the Market. Ham spoke in favor of the policy.

Scott Neller, 3300 Madison Avenue, customer and part-time vendor of photography, spoke against the addendum and stated that he has bought non-local produce at the Market at locally grown prices and feels ripped-off. The long term integrity of the Market is important. To move the Market to Memorial Stadium would allow much more space and the temptation to fill the spaces whether with local items or not. As a vendor Neller supports that during winter months other vendors besides farmers are allowed to sale products; although farmers and produce should come first.

The following individuals spoke in other support:

W.J. Switzer, 6538 Germanton Road, stated that he is neutral on this item.

Carol Heckinger, 1505 Talley Street, customer, expressed her concern about vendors not getting along. Heckinger stated she opposes the addendum and the policy; however feels that NC products should be allowed to be sold at the Market and suggested to grandfather those that have been there.

Karin Campenella, 1114 Hobbs Road, is against the addendum and stated that she is for local, but also supports the farmer who is not local and the selling of non-local items at the Market as long as the items are labeled.

The following individuals spoke against the current policy and in support of the addendum:

Ruth Foster, 3005 Steepleton Colony Court, customer, spoke in favor of the addendum and shared with the Commission a 200 signature petition in support of the addendum and those who would like to have input into the policy. Foster expressed concern that only vendors partook in the creation of the policy. Foster stated that she is a customer of the farmer who sales the cheese and is dismayed that he can no longer sale the product but yet the table across from this farmer is selling imported products. The farmer selling the cheese was granted a 6 month variance in June but then it was retracted in July. Foster also expressed concern of the timing of bringing this issue forth as it is the height of the season and farmers having invested in products that can not be sold while discussing this issue.

Amy Parson, 6279 Hant Road, Pleasant Garden, NC, customer, stated that she agrees with Foster and supports the Amish butter and cheese to be sold at the Market.

Anna Brown Lane, 806 Westridge Road, customer, stated that people are trying to make a living at the Market and if products are sold from another part of the country and the quality can be trusted, it should be sold if it helps farmers hold onto their farm. Lane stated that the public should have input into the policy.

Ken Free, Commissioner, stated that he supports vendors giving the majority input to the policy.

Marc Bush, Commissioner, stated that he visits the Farmer's Market occasionally and most do not have a problem with the variance policy. The variance policy acts as a vehicle for the cheese and other items; therefore supports the variance opportunity.

Paul Brown, Commissioner, inquired how vendors are reprimanded when variances are not granted but the vendor sales the item regardless.

Lynne Leonard, Farmer's Market Coordinator, replied stating a letter is sent to the vendor asking them not to sale the item(s).

Rose Marie Ponton stated that the mission statement in the policy states it is a place for farmers and craft persons to market locally produced goods directly to the public. The goals are to promote regional agricultural and artisans to provide a place for citizens of Greensboro to have access to fresh locally produced food and to provide a crossroad to where all citizens can come together. Ponton inquired if it should read that it is only for local vendors.

There was question as to the definition of "regional" in the policy.

Carl Brower, Jr., referred to item number 2 in the Farmer's Market Policy following the mission statement that states adjoining states may sale items at the Market.

Brown stated that regional needs to be defined more clearly.

Action Taken

A motion was made by Lori Galbreath and seconded by Carl Brower, Jr. to form a sub-committee of the Commission to review the Farmer's Market information received. Appointed sub-committee members included Galbreath, Brower, Jr., David Hoggard and Rose Marie Ponton. A vote in favor was unanimous.

Hoggard invited speakers to the next Commission meeting on October 8, 2008 at Lewis Recreation Center. The meeting information will be posted at the Market.

GYC Volunteer Recognition

This recognition was presented earlier in the meeting under recognition.

SPEAKERS FROM THE FLOOR

- NONE -

DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

Kuester thanked the Commission for listening carefully to the speakers. The sub-committee will be informed of their meeting time and location.

Kuester invited everyone to the Parks and Recreation 75th Anniversary Open House on October 3 at 6:00pm. As part of the celebration cake and punch will be served after the next Commission meeting. Kuester then turned to Laurie Thore, Marketing Director, for comment regarding the anniversary.

Thore stated that the anniversary and kickoff will be in October. An Anniversary Tabloid will be published the first of the year that tells departmental history along with current and future happenings.

Kuester commended Commission Members for their efforts, guidance, and their dedication of attending the meetings.

COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS

David Hoggard welcomed Carl Brower, Jr., and his return to the Commission.

Carl Brower, Jr. stated that he appreciates the opportunity to serve again.

Paul Brown stated that the farmers are hard workers and believes the sub-committee meeting will bring conclusion.

Rose Marie Ponton urged everyone to vote for the Parks and Recreation bond referendum and reminded everyone of the Parks and Recreation Foundation Golf Tournament on September 25, 2008. Ponton commended and thanked Hoggard for his efforts as Chair.

Marc Bush recommended that the Farmer's Market sub-committee work as quickly and diligently as possible so that the War Memorial Stadium can move forward with its future plans. Bush expressed frustration serving as a Commission Member due to prolonged stadium discussions. He is anxious to move forward. Bush visited the stadium as a result of the article in the News & Record. Bush stated that after his visit to the stadium he can not recommend the use of the stadium to a baseball event that would like to use the stadium in July 2009 due to the structural condition. The playing conditions look great.

Ken Free commended Hoggard on his efforts serving as Commission Chair. Free stated that in August 2009 the Inner City Classic, sponsored by the Metropolitan Junior Baseball League from Richmond, VA, will bring 700-1,000 youth to the city.

David Hoggard stated that there has been a lot of discussion about War Memorial Stadium and mentioned the article in the paper that reported Downtown Greensboro may want the Farmer's Market and the article about the stadium crumbling. Robbie Perkins, Councilperson, put together some ideas about what to do to make both work together. Hoggard then turned to Bob Morgan, Deputy City Manager, for comment.

Morgan stated that he was touched by David Wharton's speech at the previous Commission meeting where he read the plaque that is mounted in front of the memorial at the stadium. The plaque states that soldiers did not want a statue, they wanted a living memorial. There have been 2 failed bond referendums on this facility, so the question is how to get the rest of the community to support the stadium. The City wants to protect the historical façade with no changes to the baseball field. City Council will make final decision, but the idea would be to maintain, restore and repair the outside façade, but demolish the inside and rebuild. A structure would be built that supports the baseball facility and allow the opportunity to move the Curb Market to the stadium.

For clarification, Kuester inquired if the Curb Market would be completely moved across the street to the stadium or extended to the stadium.

Morgan replied stating that the number one priority is not to disrupt the current Farmer's Market; however an option sitting on the table is for the Market to be completely moved across the street. The idea is to build a new facility for the Curb Market and expand to perhaps have a city market. Morgan stated that he will recommend to the City

Manager and to City Council that there be a charrett process. Morgan stated that more discussions need to take place with the stakeholders. Morgan referred to Charleston and how the market there is an incubator for small businesses and is a catalyst for bringing in larger and more businesses into the area. Morgan stated that he worked with a market in Carrboro for 18 years and is one of the best markets in the country. It is a purest local market, operated by the farmers, and the city provides the facility. Morgan continued stating that while working for Carrboro the market was relocated ½ mile and people were skeptical that the market would succeed. The move was a 2 year process and is probably 2-3 times more successful.

Bush stated he believes that the public process would take approximately a year.

Morgan stated a charrett process can be completed in one weekend. Morgan informed everyone of a charrett process that was completed in one weekend consisting of 350 people.

Kuester inquired until a plan is put in place will the safety issues be addressed.

Morgan replied stating that the safety issues have been addressed. Any future loose material underneath the stadium will need to be repaired.

With no further business Hoggard adjourned the meeting at 8:04 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Marcie Richardson, Executive Assistant
Greensboro Parks and Recreation